

Alien Worlds: Astrobiology and Public Outreach

Martin Griffiths

Centre for Astronomy & Science Education

University of Glamorgan

Forest Grove, Treforest Mid Glam

UNITED KINGDOM

mgriffi8@glam.ac.uk

Over the last two years a pilot programme in astrobiology has been stimulating public interest in South Wales, UK. Funded by a European Social Fund grant of £230,000, over 350 persons have enjoyed a 20 credit university module entitled “Alien Worlds” which has introduced them to the main scientific disciplines associated with astrobiology and coupled them with the practical ability to recognise the constellations and objects of the night sky, engendering a sense of wonder and promoting the heavens as a cultural resource. This poster presentation outlines the implementation of the module, the themes and content, highlighting student feedback and training as an example of how to motivate and stimulate public awareness to the potential of astrobiology whilst addressing the religious, social, cultural and psychological factors inherent in discovering extraterrestrial life.